

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A hot plate for heating a wafer comprising a ceramic substrate in disc form, said ceramic substrate having a lower face and an upper face,

wherein a resistance element pattern having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on ~~an insulating substrate~~ the lower face of the ceramic substrate.

Claim 2 (Original): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein the thickness dispersion of the resistance element is  $\pm 1 \mu\text{m}$  or less.

B1  
Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 0.5 to 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The hot plate according to ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 1 to 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein said ~~insulating~~ ceramic substrate is at least one kind selected from a nitride ceramic[[,]] and a carbide ceramic ~~and a resin~~.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein said resistance element has a multilayer structure, and among a plurality of layers constituting said

resistance element, the layer nearest to the substrate ~~is made of~~ comprises titanium or chromium.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein said resistance element ~~is composed of~~ comprises a first layer ~~made of~~ comprising titanium; a second layer ~~made of~~ comprising molybdenum and having a larger thickness than said first layer, on said first layer; and a third layer ~~made of~~ comprising nickel and having an intermediate thickness between the thickness of said first layer and that of said second layer, on said second layer.

b1  
Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The hot plate according to claim 1, wherein said resistance element ~~is composed of~~ comprises a titanium layer having a thickness of 0.1 to 0.5  $\mu\text{m}$ , a molybdenum layer having a thickness of 0.5 to 7.0  $\mu\text{m}$ , on said titanium layer, and a nickel layer having a thickness of 0.4 to 2.5  $\mu\text{m}$ , on said molybdenum layer.

Claims 10-13 (Cancelled).

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): A process for producing a hot plate wherein a resistance element having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on an insulating substrate, comprising forming said resistance element by a film-depositing method based on a dry process.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): A process for producing a hot plate wherein a resistance element having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on an insulating substrate, comprising forming said resistance element by RF sputtering.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): A process for producing a hot plate wherein a resistance element having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on an insulating substrate, comprising printing a resistance element paste made of scaly noble metal powder and firing the paste.

Claim 17 (New): A hot plate for heating a wafer comprising a ceramic substrate in disc form, said ceramic substrate having a lower face and an upper face, wherein a resistance element pattern having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on the lower face of the ceramic substrate, and wherein said resistance element pattern is formed by a dry process.

Claim 18 (New): The hot plate according to claim 17, wherein the thickness dispersion of the resistance element is  $\pm 1 \mu\text{m}$  or less.

Claim 19 (New): The hot plate according to claim 17, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 0.5 to 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 20 (New): The hot plate according to claim 17, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 1 to 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 21 (New): The hot plate according to claim 17, wherein said ceramic substrate is at least one kind selected from a nitride ceramic and a carbide ceramic.

Claim 22 (New): The hot plate according to claim 17, wherein said dry process is RF sputtering.

Claim 23 (New): A hot plate for heating a wafer comprising a ceramic substrate in disc form, said ceramic substrate having a lower face and an upper face,  
wherein a resistance element pattern having a thickness dispersion of  $\pm 3 \mu\text{m}$  or less is formed on the lower face of the ceramic substrate, and  
wherein said resistance element pattern is made of scaly noble metal powder.

Claim 24 (New): The hot plate according to claim 23, wherein the thickness dispersion of the resistance element is  $\pm 1 \mu\text{m}$  or less.

Claim 25 (New): The hot plate according to claim 23, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 0.5 to 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 26 (New): The hot plate according to claim 23, wherein the thickness of said resistance element is from 1 to 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 27 (New): The hot plate according to claim 23, wherein said ceramic substrate is at least one kind selected from a nitride ceramic and a carbide ceramic.

Claim 28 (New): A process comprising heating a wafer with the hot plate according to claim 1.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the subject matter of Claim 13 therein, and additionally as supported in the specification at page 1, lines 13-14 and 22-23, and Figures 2 and 3, together with the description at page 6, line 15ff. The terms "composed of" and "made of" have been replaced with --comprises-- in applicable claims. Claim 13 has been cancelled. New Claims 17-28 have been added. Claims 17 and 23 are analogous to above-amended Claim 1, but recite the resistance element pattern as supported by original Claims 10 and 6, respectively. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Claims 18-21 and 24-27 are each analogous to Claims 2-5, respectively. Claim 22 is supported by original Claim 11. Finally, Claim 28 is supported in the specification at page 1, lines 29-30.

No new matter has been added by the above amendment. Claims 1-5, 7-9, and 17-28 are now active in the application. Claims 14-16 stand withdrawn from consideration.